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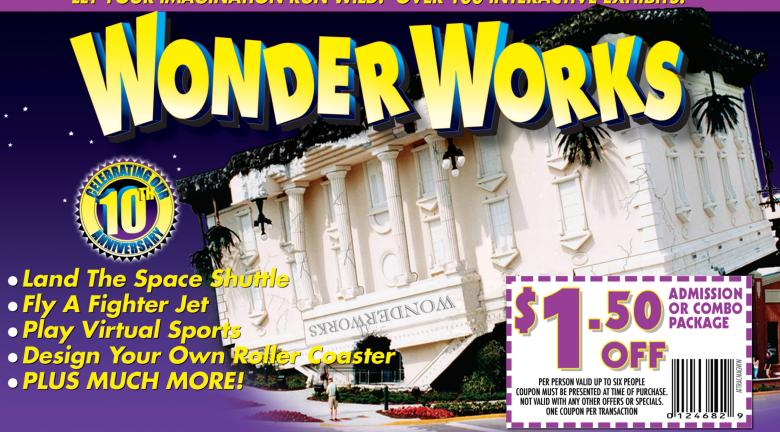
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On the cover: Bloody Mary seeks out her next victim at Halloween Horror Nights.
Background photo by Matt Roseboom.
Bloody Mary' photo courtesy Universal Orlando.

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#### ACTUAL READER TESTIMONIALS

66 I must say that the magazine has delivered far more than expected. The layout is fantastic. The mix of attractions between Walt Disney World and other Orlando-area attractions is perfect. I LOVE the generous use of pictures with the articles. 39

I also was a dedicated reader of the former Disney Magazine and was so disappointed when it stopped publication. I now have a new link to Disney news because of Orlando Attractions. It is the only magazine I read cover to cover!





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## Letters

## The Most Wonderful Time of the Year!

If there's one time period in which Orlando's attractions really shine, it's during the last three months of every year. December alone is no longer the most wonderful time of the year as Halloween celebrations now rival, and often surpass, decking the halls. Combine activities like Mickey's Not-So-Scary Halloween Party at Walt Disney World, Halloween Horror Nights at Universal Studios, Howl-O-Scream at Busch Gardens, and SeaWorld's Halloween Spooktacular with the beginning of slightly cooler weather and lighter crowds, and October quickly becomes one of our favorite months. Add in holiday decorations that begin to show up as early as mid-November, and the last three months of the year truly become the most wonderful.

> Ricky Brigante and Matt Roseboom Publishers and Orlando Fans

Ticky & Mat



#### TIME FOR TOY STORY

I knew that Toy Story Mania (at Disney's Hollywood Studios) would be busy, but we managed to get on with a wait of around five minutes at the park opening.

Twenty minutes after opening however, things were a little different. It was worth every minute though!

Chris Carter Doha, Qatar

It's been open a few months now and it's a slow time of the year for the parks, but the line is still usually more than an hour. But as you said, it's worth the wait.

#### **VIP AT UO**

.A.M

DĒC

I am on vacation here in Orlando as I write this. I am of course hitting Walt Disney World and Universal while I am here. If you are planning on coming to Orlando more than once within a year's time, get the annual pass for Universal. One thing I decided to do this year at Universal was to take their VIP Tour Experience. They offer two different tours: a one park tour which lasts five hours or the two park tour which lasts seven hours. I highly recommend the two park tour. I took it and was alad I did.

When you take one of the tours you get free valet parking which is right at the entrance to CityWalk and you get 10 percent off food in the park.

The two park tour starts in Islands of Adventure and then continues to Universal Studios. The tour guide takes you to as many rides and attractions as possible in both parks during the day. You are taken straight to the front of the line for the rides and

are let in early for some attractions. The tour guide is always in touch with their main office and knows what rides or attractions are experiencing difficulties, so they are able to plan which ride or attraction you will go on next. On my tour, we were able to hit 16 rides and attractions.

The cost for the tours varies depending on what time of the year you go and they also offer a Halloween Horror Nights VIP tour.

Frank Forrester Tappahanock, Va.

The tours sound like a lot of fun. The Halloween Horror Nights tour is cleverly called the RIP Tour and is the best way to guarantee you'll see everything in one night. You can also get a peek behind the scenes in our feature story in this issue.

#### **LOOK THE OTHER WAY**

Here's some hidden humor. Being a fan of all the parks, I tend to look the other way when on rides. Recently I looked down in The Great Movie Ride at Disney's Hollywood Studios. What I saw in the Alien section was a few computer screens. The first had

a message welcoming aliens from other galaxies. The second had a list of crew with jobs like Ear Damage Specialist and Shirt Supervising Officer. I wonder what else you can see by looking the other way.

Ronnie Dove London, UK

Good eye. When you have the time, it's always fun to study the details in the parks. But you have to be quick when riding a moving attraction.

#### **AWESTRUCK**



I was just punching around your Web site and decided to post a photo of my daughter when she met Ariel (her favorite princess) for the first time. She was so excited that she couldn't stand still waiting in line for 40 minutes. Then when we reached the grotto, she was simply awestruck. This is one of my favorite memories of that 2006 visit to WDW (Walt Disney World).

As a Disney-addict, I love reading your magazine! As much as I enjoy anything Disney-parks related, your publication has enlightened me to other offerings Orlando has outside of the Disney bubble. I'm looking forward to many, many more years of reading it. Thanks for your great work.

Kelly Z. North Grosvenordale, Conn.

#### **KUDOS**

My family just loves your magazine. When it arrives everyone wants to read it first. Even my 4-year-old son, who can't read, fights with his 8-year-old sister to look at it. Then I found your videos online and we sat all morning watching them. Keep up this excellent magazine. I know we love it.

Jill Schwalm Rochester, N.Y.

I want to thank you so much for your magazine. I was a huge fan of the Disney

#### THEN

#### AND NOW...





Much has changed in the world of Hard Rock in Orlando over the last 18 years. When Universal Studios first opened in Orlando in 1990, so did the nearby Hard Rock Cafe, dedicated by rock 'n' roll legend Chuck Berry. While there are many Hard Rock Cafe locations all over the world, the Orlando spot was one of the largest in existence at the time.

By 1998, the Universal Orlando Resort was expanding to include a new theme park, Islands of Adventure, along with a new restaurant and nightlife area known as Universal CityWalk. Just one day after the eight-year-old Hard Rock Cafe was closed, an all-new Hard Rock Cafe and Hard Rock

Live concert venue opened at CityWalk, leaving the abovepictured building abandoned just 1,000 yards away from the new location. Three years later, Hard Rock Hotel at the Universal Orlando Resort opened as well.

In 2003, Universal Studios and Hard Rock Cafe International put out a call to movie productions offering up the old Hard Rock Cafe building as an exploding or imploding building to be captured on film. No one took the offer and you can still see the old Hard Rock Cafe building near the exit of Woody Woodpecker's Nuthouse Coaster in the KidZone section of the Universal Studios theme park.

Magazine and was so sad when they stopped it. But then, there was a light at the horizon: Orlando Attractions Magazine started. Thank you very much for sending me a piece of Orlando to Germany. I'm trying to visit Orlando once a year because I need Disney magic. But with your magazine, waiting isn't too bad.

Isabell Kallhardt Esslingen, Germany

Wow is all I can say about the first five issues. Thank you for all of the hard work that you put into each magazine.

I can not get enough of WDW. I listen to Disney podcasts all day at work and then Disney music at home and while I work out at the gym. (I think I have a few

people praying for me, as they think that I have lost it!)

My daughter and I try to make it to WDW around once a year. I would like to go every month, but due to money and time, your magazine helps to fill in the gaps.

I have enclosed a check for two more years. Please extend my subscription, as I do not want to miss a single issue. I plan on your magazine being around for a long time.

> Steve Schafer Mena, Ariz.

So do we, Steve, and thanks to readers like you, we will. This is also a good time for us to remind everyone who subscribed when we started a year ago, your subscription

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#### **CUSTOM PIN TABLE**

I am a huge Disney Fan, I have always loved Disney ever since I can remember. So I am really big on collecting everything Disney and I love Disney Pins. I talked my dad into building me this coffee table so I

could display my pins in it for everyone to enjoy when they visit my Disney rooms.

Sarah Heinzen Summerset, Sd.

That's a great idea. Your dad could start his own business. Want to buy an ad? We'll trade ad space for a table.

#### **HONEYMOON BONUS**

I am going down to Disney World for my honeymoon Dec 11-20 staying at Port Orleans Riverside. I am wondering if Disney does anything special in decorating the room for people on a honeymoon or who would I call to see if there is anything they do for people that are on a honeymoon.

Chris James Markham, Ontario, Canada

It's difficult to predict when or where Disney magic will strike, but honeymoons are a likely candidate for something special to happen. Try mentioning your honeymoon when making your hotel reservation. If you've already reserved your room, call to "confirm" your reservation and casually mention that it's your honeymoon trip. Upon checking in, be sure to mention it again to the clerk at the front desk. While there are no guarantees that the hotel will do anything special for you, it's definitely not outside of the realm of possibility.

Also, be sure to pick up a pair of Minnie and Mickey bride and groom hats and wear them around Disney property whenever you can. Not only will you get congratulated regularly by cast members, but you may receive a few perks along the way as well.

#### Send us your letters and photos!

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#### TRAVEL CHANNEL'S SAMANTHA BROWN



#### By Deborah Brauser Photos by Matt Roseboom

ravel Channel hostess Samantha Brown made her 6th trip to Orlando this year, this time to speak at September's TRADE Show – the Travel Retailing and Destination Expo. During the two presentations, she entertained fans with stories of her adventures while filming the shows *Great Hotels with Samantha Brown, Samantha Brown's Disney Favorites, Passport to Europe,* and the new *Passport to Great Weekends,* which showcased the downtown Orlando and Winter Park areas in a recent episode.

Here are some of the highlights from her talks, audience Q&A session, and a quick "walk and talk" interview with Orlando Attractions Magazine.

#### Why do you think your shows have been so popular?

From the very beginning, I wanted to be seen less as an expert or a host and more as just a person. I wanted to pull viewers through the TV and have them have the experience with me. And I think that's really happened. Also, there's that 'girl next door' thing where people see me and think, 'If she can go and do this, then so can I.'

#### How much traveling do you do?

I travel about 230 days of the year. Fortunately, my husband travels with me whenever he can.

#### Do you ever travel on your own, without the cameras around?

Not really. I'm a little backwards. With



traveling so much of the year, I like to spend my vacations back home in Brooklyn, N.Y. And there's so much to do there.

#### What's one of the most important things you've learned on your journeys?

I've learned that yes, we all want to be mesmerized by the grand scope of an area, but we also crave that personal connection. That's what gives the true travel experience.

#### Is there anything that you've found during your trips that you don't like?

I really dislike being underwater. And believe it or not, I'm scared to be on horseback.

#### What is your favorite part of Orlando?

I fell in love with Johnson's Soul Food Diner (located downtown) during the filming of our Weekender series. Orlando's definitely got soul!

As part of that series, we like to go in and not just show an entire city or focus just on places that are off the beaten path. Instead, we concentrate on some parts you might not know about or have missed. And there are lots of great areas people might not know about around Orlando.

#### What's the biggest surprise you've found about Orlando?

It surprises me that so many adults come here – 50 percent without kids! So people are just having fun and feeling like kids themselves.

## You've done several Disney specials. What is your all-time favorite Disney spot?

The Animal Kingdom park and Lodge are



so special with the animals and the culture and the cast members that are actually from Africa. I haven't had a chance to go to Africa yet, but I feel like I have after being there. And I think that would be great for kids to experience. Disney has really done an amazing job with that overall.

## When it comes to the attractions, do you like roller coasters or the calmer rides?

Oh, definitely the roller coasters! And I really like Disney's Tower of Terror. I've stayed in so many hotels over the years that the idea of one running amuck is kind of funny to me.

#### What is your favorite resort in Orlando?

I'm staying at the Portofino Bay Hotel (at Universal) this trip, which is one of the first places we featured in our 'Great Hotels' series. I love everything about it and it's great to be back there.

#### What about your favorite Orlando restaurant?

You mean other than Johnson's? After a day of shooting, I usually like to relax in my hotel room and am just as happy eating a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Of course, I have also really enjoyed the bar at Emeril's.

#### So after today's event, will you go back to your hotel and rest up? Or will you go hit some of the attractions?

I haven't had a chance to catch the new Simpsons ride yet. What time does Universal Studios close? I think that might be the plan for tonight. What was I saying about Orlando making you feel like a kid again?

## Work in Progress ?

## More Work in Progress!

STATUS:

LOCATION: WORK IN PROGRESS

We recently surveyed Orlando Attractions
Magazine readers and discovered that "Work in
Progress" is a favorite section of each issue. As a
result, you're looking at a new-and-improved version
spanning four pages instead of two, with better
information and more pictures than ever before. We
hope you enjoy the change as we continue to keep
you updated on everything in progress throughout
Orlando's attractions.

## The Past Approaches

STATUS:
UNDER
CONSTRUCTION

OCATION: DOWNTOWN DISNEY





An opening date for the prehistoric T-Rex restaurant at Downtown Disney has been set for October. Construction has continued steadily over the last few weeks on a new exterior mountain range, complete with a museum-copied set of dinosaur bones from an argentinosaurus that's roughly 125 feet long. A special delivery was also made in the form of one of the restaurant's many animatronic dinosaurs. The restaurant concept was developed by Schussler Creative, the force behind the nearby Rainforest Cafe. Just as in Rainforest Cafe's regular shows featuring moving elephants, gorillas, thunder and lightning, dining at T-Rex will include a meteorite shower taking place every 20 minutes.

#### **No Wizardry Yet**

LOCATION: ISLANDS OF ADVENTUR

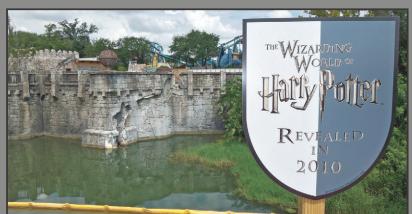
STATUS:
UNDER
CONSTRUCTION



Progress is slow but steady in the future Wizarding World of Harry Potter. Various pathways throughout the surrounding area in the back of Islands of Adventure have been opened and closed as needed. The large structure, presumably Hogwarts castle, does not yet resemble anything other than an ordinary building, as the basic infrastructure is still being put in place. Evidence of electrical and air duct work has been spotted but no sign of anything castle-like yet. The opening of this "theme park within a theme park" is still over a year away. Though the above steel frame isn't much to look at, one tidbit of information has come out of a UK documentary called "JK Rowling: A Year in the Life" which featured a scene about the planning of the upcoming Islands of Adventure area. One of the shots included a piece of concept art for an "Olivander's Wand Shop" to appear in the park.

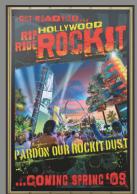
#### Timber!

LOCATION: Islands of Adventuri ■STATUS: DEMOLISHED



One casualty to the Wizarding World of Harry Potter is the Enchanted Oak Restaurant, which has been completely removed to make way for... something new. Universal Studios conducted a fan poll to determine the name of a future restaurant from the tales of Potter and the winning choice was The Three Broomsticks. While it would certainly make sense to replace one restaurant with another, there has not been any confirmation as to whether The Three Broomsticks will be built in the former Enchanted Oak spot. An ongoing poll at Universal Orlando's Web site asks fans to select the name of a drink to be served at The Three Broomsticks: Butterbeer or Pumpkin Juice. Either sounds perfectly delightful to us.

#### Rip, Roll, Construct-It







The construction of the Hollywood Rip, Roll, Rock-It roller coaster has gone from small to invasive over the course of the last few weeks, as construction walls began to dominate areas of Universal Studios. Formerly an empty space, the section between Jimmy Neutron's Nicktoon Blast and Twister... Ride It Out is now home to a flurry of activity as it is the future location of a large part of the new coaster. Added detail has been sighted on the many construction walls in the form of fictitious concert posters promoting the upcoming attraction.

#### Steakhouse No More

CONSTRUCTION





Changes continue within Disney's Contemporary Resort as the Concourse Steakhouse (pictured above in December 2007) has been completely removed and is set to be replaced by quick service dining. Construction has only just begun in this location and there is no word as to when the new restaurant will open.

#### **An Ocean of Work**

DER CONSTRUCTION



SeaWorld's recently announced Manta roller coaster and exhibit area doesn't have much in the way of sightseeing quite yet. A large lot has been cleared to make way for a variety of rays, plenty of water, and a whole lot of thrills. Within the clearing, construction has commenced and the Summer 2009 opening date is just under a year away.

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## Work in Progress ?

## Save the World... Showcase

STATUS:
IN THE WORKS
LOCATION:



Beginning later this year, guests will find more fun added to Epcot's World Showcase as characters from Disney's *Kim Possible* animated series are enlisting guests' help to "save the world" in an interactive adventure dubbed Disney's Kim Possible World Showcase Adventure. To take part, guests will pick up a "Kimmunicator" device, which resembles a cell phone, and follow mission instructions, stopping in the Mexico, Norway, China, Germany, Japan, France, or United Kingdom pavilions to trigger various visual events and take on villains from the show. This attraction will be included with admission at no additional cost, though the Kimmunicators must be returned in order to complete the mission.

#### Edutainment Strikes

STATUS: COMPLETE

LOCATION: EPCOT



A new exhibit has opened in Innoventions called Storm Struck: A Tale of Two Homes in which guests develop an understanding of severe weather safety through an immersive 3-D experience that puts them inside a Florida home during a hurricane. Historically, Epcot has been home to a mix of entertainment and education, often referred to as "edutainment," though in recent years the education level has dropped off considerably in favor of more thrills and cartoon characters. Storm Struck revives the notion of edutainment by having guests learn about the proper ways to construct a house for hurricane safety as well as what to do during a storm to stay safe. More information can be found on the exhibit's Web site at stormstruck.com.

#### And It's Official, Finally!

LOCATION: CONTEMPORARY RESOR

STATUS:
UNDER
CONSTRUCTION







We no longer have to refer to the 15-story building being erected on Disney's Contemporary Resort property as a rumored addition to Disney's Vacation Club as it has officially been announced as **Bay Lake Tower at Disney's Contemporary Villas** with an expected opening date sometime in fall 2009. Newly announced features include a rooftop lounge, lakeside pool with spiraling waterslide, and home-like amenities to be featured in every room and suite. Sales for Bay Lake Tower units have already begun.

#### **DVC** in the Trees

■STATUS:
UNDER CONSTRUCTION

SARATOGA SPRINGS RESORT & SPA





In addition to the announcement of Bay Lake Tower, Disney also confirmed that the **Treehouse Villas at Disney's Saratoga Springs Resort & Spa is also under construction** and will become part of the Disney's Vacation Club offerings. The original villas, built in the 1970s, have been removed to make way for new three-bedroom homes, each elevated 10 feet off the ground, complete with a "cabin casual" style and modern amenities.

#### Seasons of Luxury

LOCATION: WALT DISNEY WORLD

STATUS:
IN THE WORKS



A luxury resort is on the way to Walt Disney World as **Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts has purchased 298 acres of land from The Walt Disney Company** on which they will build a new hotel and golf course. The resort will feature 445 rooms in addition to vacation homes. While the project was first announced in March 2007, now that the land sale has been finalized it is anticipated the hotel will open in 2012 with the rest of the project completed within 8 to 10 years.

#### **Almost Ready**

LOCATION: Dieney's Wide World of Sports UNDER CONSTRUCTION



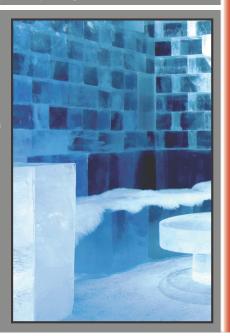
The new Jostens Center is nearing completion at Disney's Wide World of Sports Complex. This new 70,000 square-foot sports venue is slated to open sometime this summer, meaning it should be open by the time you read this. The massive indoor space can be configured for a number of different events, including basketball, volleyball, roller hockey, and more. A bowling alley is also in the works, though that won't be ready for the center's grand opening.

#### A New "Hot" Spot

■STATUS: UNDER CONSTRUCTION

LOCATION: International Drive

The tourist-filled International Drive area of Orlando is going to get a whole lot cooler in the near future as **construction of ICEBAR Orlando nears completion**. This 4,000-square-foot bar was set to open on Oct. 3 and remain open 365 days a year. Guests of all ages are welcome to their 45-minute experience that begins with receiving a cape and gloves to stay warm while inside the 27-degree bar made of ice. Fifteen thousand gallons of water are being used to form the 50 tons of ice in this Florida weather-defying construction that will receive a new design every six months.



#### For more "Work in Progress" visit the



web site @ attractionsmagazine.com

## **Videos**



## **Photos**



and the latest news and information at the

## Filtractions Blog

attractionsmagazine.com/blog

## VERSUS

## WE PUT ATTRACTIONS HEAD-TO-HEAD

#### 

#### MICKEY'S NOT-SO-SCARY HALLOWEEN PARTY VS . UNIVERSAL'S HALLOWEEN HORROR NIGHTS



WINNER: Disney's got everyone's favorite mouse hosting their party.

New Universal characters can't quite compete with 80 years of memories.



**TOSS-UP:** The Haunted Mansion is the inspiration for every other haunt around.



TOSS-UP: Ever-inventive mazes take haunted houses to a whole new level.



**TOSS-UP:** Disney gives guests the chance to trick-or-treat, with or without costumes, no matter their ages.



TOSS-UP: Scare zones have been known to cause adults to act like children who are afraid of the dark.



The Villain's Mix & Mingle show in front of Cinderella Castle begins with plenty of potential but ends before it really gets going.



**WINNER:** In their Excellent Halloween Adventure, Bill & Ted crack hilarious jokes about anything and everything in pop culture.



**WINNER:** The "Boo-to-You" parade and Happy HalloWishes fireworks are worth the price of admission alone.



Universal hasn't put on a Halloween parade in several years and sideshow acts offer just a few minutes of entertainment.

## Vacation Planner >

#### **OCTOBER**

**Daily** - The **Epcot Food & Wine Festival** around the World Showcase, featuring food from around the world along with the following concerts:

Oct. 1-4 - Starship starring

Mickey Thomas

Oct. 5-7 - En Vogue

Oct. 8-9 - Jonny Lang

Oct. 10-12 - Peabo Bryson

Oct. 13-14 - Sister Hazel

Oct. 15-16 - David Sanborn

Oct. 17-18 - Jon Secada

Oct. 19-21 - Spyro Gyra

Oct. 22-23 - Otis Day & the Knights

Oct. 24-26 - Exposé

Oct. 27-28 - Kool & The Gang

Oct. 29-30 - Boyz II Men

Oct. 31 - Atlanta Rhythm Section

Mickey's Not-So-Scary Halloween Party will take place at the Magic Kingdom on the following nights: Oct. 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 13, 16, 19, 21, 23, 24, 26, 28, 30 and 31.

Howl-O-Scream will take place at Busch Gardens Oct. 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25, 30, and 31. The event starts at 7:30 p.m. each night.

Halloween Horror Nights will take place at Universal Studios on the following nights: Oct. 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, and 31.



SeaWorld's Halloween Spooktacular will take place on Oct. 4, 5, 11, 12, 18. 19, 24, 25, 26 and 31. Kids can trick-or-treat, dance and meet characters.

**4** Cypress Gardens' Splash Island water park is throwing open its gates from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the ultimate **canine pool party**.

**10 - 11 Oktoberfest** will be held in Celebration, Fla. starting at 5 p.m. each day.

**24 Billy Currington** will be in concert at 7:30 p.m. at Cypress Gardens.

**24 Harbor Nights** Wine Tasting & Jazz at Loews Portofino Bay Hotel.

**26** Cypress Gardens will hold a **Car & Truck Show** in their concert area.

**30 Velvet Sessions**, the monthly rock n' roll cocktail party at the Hard Rock Hotel starts at 6:30 p.m.

#### **NOVEMBER**

1 - 9 - The **Epcot Food & Wine Festival** around the World Showcase, featuring food from around the world along with the following concerts:

Nov. 2 - Atlanta Rhythm Section

Nov. 3-5 - David Cassidy

Nov. 6-7 - Night Ranger

Nov. 8-9 - Los Lobos

**1 Howl-O-Scream** at Busch Gardens. The event starts at 7:30 p.m.

**1 Halloween Horror Nights** will take place at Universal Studios at night.

**1 An Alfa Romeo Car Show** will be held in Celebration, Fla. from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**7-9** More than 150 award-winning national and local fine artists will be on display from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the **Festival of the Masters** at Downtown Disney.

**8 - 9 Space & Air Show** at Kennedy Space Center will feature a performance by the Blue Angels.

**12-16** Walking With Dinosaurs The Live Experience will perform at the Amway Arena. Visit dinosaurlive.com for more information.

**14 - 30** SeaWorld will allow guests to ride **The Polar Express.** (continues in Dec.)

**15 - 16** Disney's Hollywood Studios plays host to the annual ABC SOAPnet **Super Soap Weekend.** 

Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party will take place at the Magic Kingdom on the following dates: Nov. 10, 11, 14, 16, 20, 21 and 30. (continues in Dec.)

**28 - 30** Epcot will hold a **Candlelight Processional** at the American Gardens Theatre at 5, 6:45 and 8:15 p.m. on select nights. John O'Hurley will be the celebrity narrator. *(continues in Dec.)* 

**28-30 Mickey's Jammin' Jungle Parade** will perform daily at Disney's Animal Kingdom. *(continues in Dec.)* 

**28 - 30 Now Snowing** in Celebration, Fla. features strolling Charles Dickens Carolers, photos with Santa, the Celebration Express,

horse drawn carriage rides, and nightly snowfall at 6, 7, 8 and 9 p.m. (continues in Dec.)



**28 - 30** The Osborne Family Spectacle of Dancing Lights will light nightly at Disney's Hollywood Studios. (continues in Dec.)

#### **DECEMBER**

1 - 30 Epcot will hold a Candlelight Processional at the American Gardens Theatre at 5, 6:45 and 8:15 p.m. on select nights. Celebrity narrators scheduled to appear are:

1-3 - To Be Announced

4-6-Brian Stokes Mitchell

7 - 9 - Virginia Madsen

10 - 12 - Marlee Matlin

13 - 15 - Monique Coleman

16 - 18 - Chita Rivera

19 - 21 - Abigail Breslin

22 - 24 - Steven Curtis Chapman

25 - 27 - Edward James Olmos

**28 - 30** - Angela Bassett and Courtney Vance

**1 - 31 Now Snowing** in Celebration, Fla. features strolling Charles Dickens Carolers, photos with Santa, the Celebration Express, horse drawn carriage rides, and nightly snowfall at 6, 7, 8 and 9 p.m.

Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party will take place at the Magic Kingdom on the following dates: Dec. 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 16, 18 and 19.

Wheel of Fortune will tape four weeks of television episodes at SeaWorld on the following dates: Dec. 11, 12, 14 and 15. Dec. 1 - Jan. 4 SeaWorld will allow guests to ride The Polar Express.

Dec. 1 - Jan. 4 The Osborne Family Spectacle of Dancing Lights will light nightly at Disney's Hollywood Studios. Dec. 1 - Jan. 4 Mickey's Jammin' Jungle Parade will perform daily at Disney's Animal Kingdom.

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## **Photo Finds**

Orlando is always filled with fun things to see and our photographers are there to capture it all.

Visit our Web site for videos and photos from many of these events.





Chinese-born actress Ming-Na Wen, the voice of the character "Mulan" in the Disney animated films "Mulan" and "Mulan II" met with fans at Disney's Hollywood Studios on July 26.

#### Olympic champion swimmer Michael Phelps

met with the local South West Stars swim team at the Magic Kingdom, giving each member an autographed copy of Sports Illustrated with him on the cover. For more on Phelps' Magic Kingdom appearance, turn to page 48 of this issue.



Disney's first-ever Chief Magic Official (CMO) Justin Muchoney paid yet another visit to Walt Disney World in honor of Michael Phelps' visit. Muchoney became CMO in April by winning a contest and has since helped spread Disney magic in Orlando and Disneyland in California numerous times. He holds the position until April 2009.



**Both SeaWorld and Busch Gardens have** added a new Quick Queue option which allows access through the express entrances of the major rides and shows. The new Quick Queue service costs \$29.95 per person, per day, with a limited number of passes available each day.



An animal trainer from Worlds of Discovery, the brand name for SeaWorld and Busch Gardens, shows off a two-toed sloth at TheTradeShow. The travel and destination expo was held at the Orange County Convention Center on Sept. 7 to 9. Disney, Universal and many other Orlando businesses were also in attendance. One of the convention's guest speakers was Travel Channel's Samantha Brown. Don't miss the interview with her on page 9 of this issue.



The touring Hot Import Nights car show made a stop at the Orange County Convention Center on July 19. The automotive lifestyle event featured a dazzling display of customized show cars, live music and dance performances in a lights-out, nightclub atmosphere.



**The 2008 Pokémon World Championships** were held Aug. 15 to 17 at the Hilton Orlando Resort near Downtown Disney. More than 400 contestants from 25 countries competed in the trading card game finals and video game players from all over the country were in attendance.

Orlando Science Center's Paleontologist Jimmy Waldron announces the upcoming show Walking With Dinosaurs at the Amway Arena. The shows will be performed from Nov. 12 to 16. Walking With Dinosaurs is a live-action stage show with realistic dinosaur puppets up to 36 feet tall.





# BEHIND THE FRIGHTS AT WARRING THE FRIGHTS AT WARRING TO THE FRIGHT AT WARRING TO THE FRIGHT AT WARRING TO THE FRIGHT AT WA

## WRITTEN BY RICKY BRIGANTE PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATT ROSEBOOM

ot every scary story begins with a dark and stormy night. The story of how Universal Studios' annual Halloween Horror Nights event is created begins in the minds of a select few talented artists, designers and writers.

Halloween Horror Nights is the name given to the separately ticketed, scare-filled event that takes place within the Universal Studios theme park on select nights during the weeks surrounding Oct. 31 each year. This year marks the 18th incarnation of the special event that first launched in 1991 as Universal Studios Fright Nights. While Fright Nights came and went in just three nights, Halloween Horror Nights, as it became known in

1992, has since expanded to 23 nights with two nights in September and even one after Halloween on Nov. 1.

Those who think Halloween is all about brightly colored smiling jack-olanterns and children parading down residential streets in their superhero costumes, are in for a shock, and possibly even a mental breakdown when entering Halloween Horror Nights for the first time. From the moment you pass through the entrance turnstiles, you're immersed into a world of dim lighting, eerie sounds and music and a whole lot of mist and fog. This ambience simply sets the stage for the many chills the night has to offer.

Throughout the park, you'll encounter some of the world's most detailed, inventive and fright-inducing haunted houses (also referred to as mazes), each with its own ghoulish theme and story. You're not safe from startles outside of the mazes either, as "scare zones" are

packed with Universal's "scareactors" (rhymes with characters) whose job it is to keep everyone unsettled throughout the night.

Each year, Halloween Horror Nights takes the act of scaring theme park guests to a whole new level by adding more haunted houses, scare zones, scareactors and live shows. Universal Studios, as a decades-old company, is widely known for creating or popularizing some of the world's most recognizable monsters, including Frankenstein's Monster, The Mummy, Dracula and many more. So how does a company rooted in the world of classic movie monsters continue to develop new and unique horror icons and attractions for its Orlando theme parks, separating itself from the other local family-friendly destinations?

## THE MIND BEHIND THE MADNESS

The best person to answer that question is Michael Roddy, manager of show development at Universal Orlando Resort. Roddy has worked on all but the first couple of Halloween Horror Nights and has a knack for all things horror. As he puts it, "Halloween has been in my DNA since I was a little kid."

While his background lies in theater, performance, and writing, his career at Universal Studios appropriately began with him playing the role of a Ghostbuster in a theme park stage show. He later went on to portray other characters including Dudley Do-Right and one of the Blues Brothers. When Halloween Horror Nights came around, Roddy was given the responsibility of stepping into the classic role of Alfred Hitchcock's Norman Bates character from the film Psycho. Outside of performing, Roddy also wrote the dialogue and backstory featured in the queue videos starring Brendan Fraser in The Revenge of the Mummy attraction.

Combining his knowledge of performance with his knack for clever writing, Roddy became a perfect fit to lead a team bringing Halloween Horror Nights from a relatively small happening



MICHAEL RODDY, MANAGER OF SHOW DEVELOPMENT

to the dominating annual event that it is today.

Since Halloween Horror Nights has grown to be one of the industry's leading haunted attractions, Universal Studios takes secrecy surrounding each year's new ideas very seriously. The place where the event's devilish designs are concocted can be found tucked away in the Universal Studios backlot, in an unassuming set of trailers, and behind a door marked "Authorized Personnel Only." Just beyond that door lies endless rows of cubicles wallpapered with sketches, posters, and other pieces of artwork from Halloween Horror Nights' past and present. And still beyond those cubicles sits Roddy's office.

The office of Michael Roddy directly reflects what goes on inside the head of a creative force behind an event like Halloween Horror Nights. One office wall is filled with sketches of past Halloween Horror Nights creations, the opposite lined with autographs to Roddy from various Hollywood actors and directors (most from the horror genre). Littered throughout the office are various props, including theme park replicas of a *Ghostbusters* trap and a *Back to the Future* hoverboard, and action figures depicting

classic and contemporary movie and television icons, from Charlie Brown and the Grinch to Jaws and Captain Kirk.

It is in this unique environment that the pieces of each year's Halloween Horror Nights begin to take shape. Roddy's surroundings are filled with inspiration from varying styles and genres and it's quite clear that Halloween is on his mind year-round.

#### SPAWN OF AN IDEA

While Halloween Horror Nights takes place during just 23 out of 365 nights this year, Roddy works on the project year-round, with a goal of consistently raising the bar on immersive horror experiences. "The creative process for Halloween is ongoing now," said Roddy. "There never is a definitive start date. I'm working on Halloween for 2009 and 2010 right now."

The basics of creating Halloween Horror Nights each year lie in targeting a specific audience that differs from other more family-friendly Halloween-themed parties in Orlando. Roddy makes it clear that Halloween Horror Nights is, in movie rating terms, "PG-13, bordering on R. We push it because that's what people want. They come here for that," he said.

### LAST YEAR...



JACK THE CLOWN INVITED PARK GOERS TO ATTEND HIS "CARNIVAL OF CARNAGE" AND HE BROUGHT A FEW SPECIAL GUESTS IN FOR SUPPORT.

ON OPENING NIGHT, FREDDY KRUEGER CLAIMED HIS FIRST VICTIM ON STAGE FOLLOWING APPEARANCES BY JASON VOORHEES AND LEATHERFACE.

"This is an intense event and there are things that a child probably couldn't deal with, nor should deal with." He admits that occasionally their creativity does run a little too wild. "Sometimes we pull back because we say 'that's too much'."

To ensure that his projects successfully reach Universal's thousands of guests in the way he intends, Roddy puts himself into their shoes. "I have the ability to be a great audience," Roddy explained, "which is where I always like to start with any product. Whether it's Halloween, whether it's How the Grinch Stole Christmas, whether it's an attraction, I try to forget all the tricks of the trade and make myself an audience member."

Roddy is tuned in to the thousands of fans of the annual haunted events, regularly getting feedback by visiting fan Web sites. "We're fans of the fans that are fans of Halloween," Roddy said. Based on feedback from the fans, adjustments are made.

Of course, Roddy is not solely responsible for everything seen during Halloween Horror Nights, though his team is impressively small. About five creatively twisted minds at Universal Studios are tuned into the more macabre side of life and each individually begins their own unique thought processes for

future years' events. Roddy explained, "We'll all walk the event and watch what people are really tuned into – what's the home run, what's kind of not working, what's working, and make mental notes." What follows is a gathering that any haunt fan would give anything to sit in on. The team assembles in what they refer to as a "post-mortem" where each contributor brings up new ideas for discussion.

A FEMALE FIRST

Each year, Halloween Horror Nights presents a new opportunity for the **Universal Creative** team to use or invent a new set of characters to send guests screaming into the night. One of the most notable characters to come out of the event is Jack (pictured above), an evil clown who receives delight from the misfortune of others. Jack, who first appeared in 2000 as the icon for Halloween Horror Nights 10, is Michael Roddy's creation and has appeared as one of the main icons in four of the last nine years. In 2007, Jack

became the ringleader welcoming the

first-ever theme park appearances of the classic New Line Cinema horror characters of *A Nightmare on Elm Street's* Freddy Krueger (pictured above), *Friday* the 13th's Jason Voorhees, and *The Texas* Chainsaw Massacre's Leatherface.

In selecting which icon would represent 2008's Halloween Horror Nights, Roddy and his team decided it was time to move in a completely different direction. "We loved having Freddy, Jason, and Leatherface added to our catalog of characters," Roddy

diversity. We have trained our audiences that we don't like to repeat ourselves – that there's always fresh content, specifically with the Halloween product. So we went into our creative mode and said, 'How do we really do something that's

explained. "But ... we're about

different than a madman – that's different than a slasher?', and we knew we wanted to do something supernatural. We also knew for a long time we've wanted to have a female icon – a very powerful female icon."

Early discussions revolved around

the idea of creating a wife or girlfriend for Jack the Clown – Jill, who had often been speculated about on fan Web sites. But ultimately, Roddy had other plans. "I created Jack and I was very adamant that maybe we should give Jack a break for a while," said Roddy. "I really wanted to do something supernatural and spooky."

Rather than inventing a new character, the team decided to take a look at the world of urban legends. Drawing inspiration from classic myths and fairy tales, they began to focus on which of these legends would make a great icon to base several weeks of terror.

A survey was sent out to research which urban legends had the greatest effect on people. Roddy said that from the results, the team discovered that, "the awareness on Bloody Mary was number two on all urban legends and myths. [The Amityville Horror was number one.] From an age demographic from young adults all the way to sixties, [recognition was] somewhere between 70 and 80 percent. So, we knew this is compelling." The new powerful female icon they were looking for was indeed going to be Bloody Mary.

While she isn't the first female icon for Halloween Horror Nights (that honor goes jointly to the Storyteller and the Terra Queen, both of whom were created for Halloween Horror Nights 15), she is definitely the first female icon that nearly all guests are already familiar with. But the team wondered how exactly they would turn the vague notion of this character into an entire year's theme.

"There are several different backstories [for Bloody Mary] out there in the urban legend mythos," said Roddy. "Everybody knows that if you stand in front of the mirror and say her name three times, something bad is supposed to happen." After that basic fact, the tales surrounding this eerie entity seem to vary quite a bit, as any urban legend does. So it was up to the Universal team to create their own intricate story.

Roddy asked, "What if Mary was the keeper of these legends? What <u>if she was</u>



#### PROMOTIONAL PERIL

This year marks the first time that the Halloween Horror Nights icon house, Reflections of Fear, is tied directly to the marketing campaign used to promote the event. Television commercials, print material, and billboards all feature Bloody Mary and/or a mirror.

The billboards lining highways around Orlando have caused a bit of commotion with some local parents who believe they are too frightening for children. When asked about his opinion on the reaction to these billboards, Michael Roddy said, "I understand — I have two kids myself, but that is not the most intense thing we've ever shown. ... I respect their opinion, but that means that we're doing our job. It's Halloween Horror Nights — we're not selling soap."

the one on her side of the mirror, where all these legends, the true versions of them, exist?" Their story of Bloody Mary ultimately evolved into that of Dr. Mary Agana, a psychiatrist whose job it was to cure people of their fears by exposure. As Roddy tells it, "Let's say you had a fear of water. Her thinking was that if she strapped you into a position where you couldn't move and then submerged you into a tub of water repeatedly, sooner or later you'd get over your fear."

In this version of the story, Mary would monitor her patients from behind a two-way mirror. "She had a safe word, 'Call my name three times and I'll stop." Unfortunately for the patients in this story, Mary discovered that she had her own fear: she was afraid of death. Roddy continued the ghost story, "She realized, 'How do I cure myself?' She started letting her patients die until one patient broke free and pulled her through

the mirror. In her last dying moment, she saw her reflection through the broken mirror. That transformed her into this entity that we call Bloody Mary." He capped off the tale by joking, "Kind of fun stuff."

Roddy is convinced that Bloody Mary is one of their scariest icons to date, but not for the same reasons that people fear Jack. "Jack the Clown was very unsettling because you don't know what's under the makeup. I think we've been able to transcend that with Mary. You don't know what she's really looking at or where the emotion's coming from," said Roddy. "If you rob somebody of their eyes, that's the window into the soul, so anything can be going on behind those eyes and you can't tell."

As they've written it, "If you come to the event and you walk through the gates, that is the same as saying her name three times, so you're going to be on

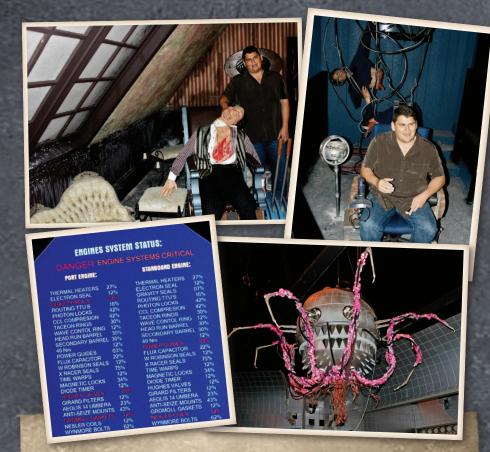
her side of the mirror with all of those legends." While the entire backstory unfolds on the Halloween Horror Nights Web site, at halloweenhorrornights.com, it's not necessary for guests to know it all in advance because, according to Roddy, "If you don't see all of that, you're still going to get your pants scared off of you."

## THE DEVIL'S IN THE DETAILS

Once the basic ideas, themes and icons for each year's event have been planned, the details begin to get filled in. That job definitely takes more than a five-person team to make it happen. "We bring in extra help – designers, artists, CAD artists, SketchUp model artists, illustrators – that start fleshing out the experiences so that we can start seeing and walking and living in this designed, fabricated world," Roddy explained.

Different elements often require different specialists. "We have a great guy whose name is David Hughes and he has been involved as the senior art supervisor for Halloween Horror Nights for the last five or six years," Roddy added. "He brings in a crew of designers and they design everything that you'll see in that house – every wall, every piece of architecture. Then there's another set that comes in that overlays the scenic dressing, from the type of chair that will be in the room to the type of cloth fabric."

Beyond the decor, most of the haunted mazes throughout Halloween Horror Nights are filled with gruesome body parts literally hanging around. "I have to mention our prosthetics guys," Roddy said. "[They're] led by a guy named Michael Burnett." Burnett begins the task of setting the mood by marking the future location of torsos, heads, and other appendages. "What he does is he puts these placeholders here, and ... he'll go and be his mad scientist self and you'll come back like a day [later], those guts will actually

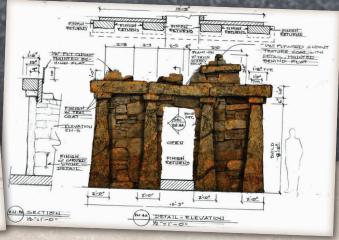


#### HIDDEN HORROR

During a tour, Michael Roddy pointed out some hidden in-joke designs included amongst the details inside this year's haunted houses. Here are a few you can look for in-between scares:

- Near the beginning of the *Body Collectors* maze, look for the sign reading "Aiello and Roddy" above the entrance to a barbershop. It refers to two of Halloween Horror Nights' designers, Mike Aiello and, of course, Michael Roddy.
- Fans of the recent movie *Sweeney Todd* should notice a striking similarity between the barbershop scene (above, top-left) in the *Body Collectors* maze and Todd's own barbershop in the film, down to a familiarly costumed body seated on a lever-adorned barber chair.
- Throughout several of the houses, animatronics and other random heads are featured. Many times, the prosthetics guys have actually taken a mold of themselves, designers, or family members to use for these creations.
- Listen throughout the park for the sounds of children saying "Bloody Mary" and "trick or treat". Those voices are Michael Roddy's kids.
- In the *Interstellar Terror* house, there are lit-up spaceship computer panels (above, bottom-left), many of which feature designers' and coordinators' names along with unique spaceship equipment names like "flux capacitor" (a reference to *Back to the Future*) and "time warps" (a reference to *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*).
- Also inside *Interstellar Terror*, there is a scene that takes place on the bridge, featuring the captain of the ship and his chair (above, top-right). Roddy admits that he enjoys downtime by occasionally playing space captain in that chair (remember the Captain Kirk action figure in his office?).
- At the end of *Interstellar Terror*, the pulsating artifact (above, bottom-right) hovering above guests' heads is actually a reused spaceship model from *ET: The Extra-Terrestrial*.







Intricate plans are drawn up for every wall featured within the many haunted mazes found at Halloween Horror Nights. These plans are then used as guides during construction and detailing.

The above-left drawing is one of the first walls guests will see when entering the *Body Collectors* maze this year. The photograph to the left shows that same wall nearly completed.

The above-right drawing depicts an entirely different style of wall from this year's haunted house called *The Hallow*.



be out and formed and dripping goo. He's amazing."

Any horror fan's dream job would be to take part in helping to decorate the haunted houses. Roddy certainly enjoys it. "We actually have two days: one is where they come in and they distress everything and then we have something that we love called 'blood day'. ... We wear our worst jeans and a T-shirt. We come in with the head designers and we go through every maze and we go, 'What gets blooded?' It's fun because we actually go, 'Okay, so if there's someone here that got hit this way, the blood would go here' – it's our own CSI."

#### HOLLYWOOD TRICKS MAKE HALLOWEEN TREATS

The physical locations of each year's haunted houses vary, though over time the Halloween Horror Nights team has secured a few permanent locations. Universal Orlando is not only home to two world-class theme parks, but is also a working studio, hosting television, movie, and commercial shoots on their backlot soundstages – the very same

soundstages that contain several mazes for Halloween Horror Nights.

Maze floor plans change for every house, but certain elements are almost always present in the basic design of each one. Roddy revealed some of his learned tricks for creating a successful haunted attraction. One such trick lies in the art of misdirection, where a wellplaced scareactor will be featured in plain sight as guests enter a room (like up on the balcony to which Michael Roddy is pointing in the photo to the right). Lighting often draws extra attention to that character. As guests feel safe for a moment, knowing that they see what's coming, a different scareactor suddenly emerges from a false wall or unseen doorway nearby, startling guests. (In this photo, that unnoticed doorway is pictured behind Roddy.) To top it off, a few feet further down the path, another scareactor lurks just out of sight, ready for a second scare.

But the haunted houses of Halloween Horror Nights are not designed with constant startles in mind. "We also like to, in certain experiences, let you rest for a moment." Roddy explained that the rest areas are, "just keeping you within

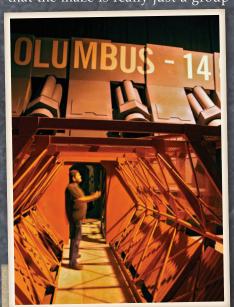


the atmosphere. There will be cold air, fog and sound effects, but it's like, 'OK, I can catch my breath.' In that moment, what we've found is [that] it's great to let people reflect on, 'Oh my God, what did I just see?', before, 'Here I go again.'" These areas prevent guests from getting acclimated to the environment. Without these rest-filled moments, the

Universal team has discovered that your brain will shut down. "If I constantly just kept startling you, it's like, after the fifth time, your body protects you," explained Roddy.

A technique used to increase believability inside Universal's haunted houses is the inclusion of ceiling treatments throughout. Roddy explains that having a false ceiling a few feet above guests' heads "just feels real because there is some type of roof above you."

The haunted mazes are built to transport guests to ghost towns, waterfront shacks, outer space or other supernatural locations by way of wellexecuted illusions. The construction of the mazes is "very much modeled after film," explained Roddy. "You can see that in our mazes - they're film sets." When wandering through a maze under show lighting conditions, guests feel like they have been whisked away to another place, filled with creatures and other menaces around every corner. But remove those beings, turn off all of the sound effects and bring the work lights up, and it quickly becomes obvious that the maze is really just a group



Lighting, sound and fog effects transform this elaborate soundstage set into a spaceship boarding platform that forms the entrance to the *Interstellar Terror* maze.

of elaborately painted and decorated panels, intricately assembled inside warehouse-like soundstages.

Doors and hidden panels that lead to scareactors at night open to bare soundstage walls, electrical wiring, and fans during the day. Props that drip, shriek, and aim to surprise guests at night, simply hang there, mostly ignored, when inactivated throughout the day. However, even knowing that it's all an elaborate illusion, there's still a sinister sense of foreboding when walking between the painstakingly detailed walls and sets during the day, which is a testament to the creative ability of Universal's many artists and designers.

#### Lurking Around Every Corner

No amount of artistic detail, fake blood spatter, or prosthetic limbs can surpass the scare factor delivered by Halloween Horror Nights' most important aspect: the scareactors. Each year, a crew of unique employees is hired to be made over from ordinary people into extraordinary scream-inducing freaks, ghouls and creatures. As Michael Roddy put it, "They are the life's blood for our event."

Now that Halloween Horror Nights has reached its 18th year, the process of casting a crew of scareactors has become a bit routine. "We have a huge workforce of people that we invite back," Roddy said. "We have a thing called a reunion audition in the middle of summer [featuring] people that have worked year after year after year. We know what they can do – we pretty much know most of those people by name. Sometimes we even write roles for specific people."

Casting new hires is as simple has holding a series of auditions, though not every audition is the same. Roddy said that selecting what type of character someone should play sometimes involves asking them to do their best to be scary and other times requires them to state what their favorite scary movie is. It's



Michael Roddy demonstrates one scare found in *Interstellar Terror* in which a scareactor pulls a set of wires into his or her chest, triggering sparks and sound effects of a simulated electrocution.

all about choosing the right character for the right person to play.

Scaring unsuspecting guests inside Halloween Horror Nights' haunted mazes is not always fun. Roddy noted that it's actually a rather difficult position due to the commitment involved, though the rewards are worth it. "For eight hours or six hours, you get that adrenaline rush that you did when you were a little kid and you scared your grandmother," he said. "You get that repeatedly as 4,000 or more walk through this environment that you may be an actor in. It's also very taxing and we have a great deal of respect for those people."

Prior to performing in front of guests, scareactors are trained in the ways of scaring. Roddy mentioned a few of their techniques. "You have to read the people that you're scaring. No two 'victims' are alike. ... It's observing who the 'victim' is that's walking into the room and giving them the choice of which one of those people will be the best impact. That's



Not every scareactor is a real person. The four pictured above, found in the *Body Collectors* maze, are actually dummies, but when guests turn a dark corner and spot these heads out of the corner of their eyes, they won't know the difference and will be equally as scared.

In the streets of Universal Studios, some of the most popular scareactors are the chainsaw-wielding maniacs (pictured right). While the chainsaws have no blades, they do have loud sound effects that help chase away unsuspecting guests.



the word that we like to use – impact – because we don't want to startle you, we want to scare you.

"So with the scareactors we say, sometimes you let the audience in on it. Sometimes it's not about jumping out of a space, it's about being in a space when they come in and how you react to them walking into your space. Or, finding someone that walks in and locking eyes with them and selling this character through nothing more than your eyes."

So when guests are wandering through a maze, constantly anticipating a big scare from the zombie lurking in the corner but it never comes, it's all part of the plan. Roddy elaborated with a smile, "We don't want to just startle them – we want to screw them up for a while."

And how does Roddy know when the scareactors are ready to perform for guests? "If I get scared, I will stop and walk backstage and applaud that person because I love it. I love when they scare me."

#### The Haunts of 2008

This year's Halloween Horror Nights promises more haunted houses than ever before with eight separate maze

experiences, many of which spill out beyond their borders and into the nearby streets.

The main house is called *Reflections* of *Fear* and features this year's icon, Bloody Mary. Guests travel through time as they enter into Mary's house as it existed in the 1950s, when Mary began her experiments, and ultimately end up witnessing a few of Mary's patient interactions culminating in guests' own interactions with Mary's ghost as she appears today. Needless to say, guests can expect plenty of mirrors to be found throughout this maze.

Another house Michael Roddy is especially proud of is called *Dead Exposure*. He refers to it as their R&D

house, where they are experimenting with research and development of new technologies.

"Basically *Dead Exposure* is taking you and putting you into photographs," said Roddy. "You are actually walking through a completely black house. Everything from the walls, to the furniture, to the characters is painted completely black. Then we went back and shaded everything with UV paint. We hit it with a strobe when you walk into the room so it looks like a still blacklight photo. It's awesome."

The other six houses include:

*Creatures,* which Roddy summarizes as rednecks versus creatures in a throwback to the '50s sci-fi.

#### RODDY'S TERROR TIPS

Since this year's Halloween Horror Nights is bigger than ever, don't expect to fit everything in during one night's visit.

The event is a separately ticketed one, so attending a second night could become very costly. Michael Roddy highly recommends the Frequent Fear pass, which enables repeat visits to Halloween Horror Nights for a one-time price. Discounts are also available for Florida residents and Universal Studios Passholders.

Upon arriving to the event, Roddy also suggests experiencing the soundstage houses earlier in the evening, as the lines can get very long. He says that the stage shows can wait until the later showings.

Most importantly, Roddy wants all guests to have a good time and not stress about missing anything. He believes that simply walking around and enjoying the street scare zones is worth the price of admission.



This artwork depicts a covered bridge that forms part of a scare zone called The Path of the Wicked. The story behind this area is rooted in the world of *The Wizard of* Oz, but in this version, the Wicked Witch has done away with Dorothy and taken over Oz. Included here amongst the scareactors are the film's infamous flying monkeys.

Placing guests beyond Earth's boundaries, Interstellar Terror depicts what happens if a space crew got a severe form of cabin fever due to a discovered artifact.

Scary Tales – Once Upon a Nightmare is the third in a line of Scary Tales houses in which guests are brought into twisted versions of classic children's fairy tales.

Doomsday is based on a Universal horror film of the same name that was released earlier this year.

The Hallow brings to life the origins of everything that is cliche about Halloween, from the black cat to the witch's cauldron.

Finally, *Body Collectors – Collections of* the Past brings guests face-to-face with those really responsible for famous massmurders of the past.

In addition to these mazes, six scarezones, ranging in theme from Alice in Wonderland (known here as Asylum in Wonderland) to a distorted version of *The Wizard of Oz*, will be sure to keep all guests on edge.

#### Future Frights

Michael Roddy and his team are always coming up with new ideas to keep Halloween Horror Nights fresh and entertaining. By the time 2008 ends, less than two months after this year's event is over, construction will have begun on the mazes for 2009.

In 2002, the event left Universal Studios for the first time for a change

of scenery at Islands of Adventure next door. The new location was so successful that it stayed there for four years. Roddy hinted that "there might be a time and place in the very near future where you're at both parks - one huge megaevent."

Beyond the haunted houses and scare zones, many of the theme parks' rides are also open throughout Halloween Horror Nights. In the past, during select years, these attractions have also become "haunted," with scareactors present in select locations within the rides. Roddy indicated that this is definitely a possibility for the future, "As new attractions come online, things like [the under-construction roller coaster] Hollywood Rip, Ride, Rock-It, there are great opportunities to integrate Halloween into that." When asked specifically if Bloody Mary would make an appearance in any attractions this year, Roddy simply stated, "Let me just tease and say Bloody Mary will be present."

Only the small team that works behind the mysterious "Authorized Personnel Only" door, deep within the backlot of Universal Studios can say for sure what guests can expect to see during Halloween Horror Nights in the future. What can be guaranteed is that this team, along with hundreds of other artists, designers, and scareactors, are striving every day of the year to invent unique experiences that are sure to frighten each and every guest that encounters them.

#### A LITTLE COMIC RELIEF

Not everything at Halloween Horror Nights is designed to scare the wits out of guests. One of the most popular elements of each year's event is the comedy-filled "Bill and Ted's Excellent Halloween Adventure."

Roddy describes the show as Universal's version of Saturday Night Live. "If you're a celebrity and you've done something stupid this year you will be roasted," said Roddy.

Roddy is proud that Universal Studios has been able to keep the characters of Bill and Ted, who haven't been in a movie since the early '90s, relevant. "Bill and Ted are great characters ...

because everybody likes them and they have a time-traveling phone booth, so they can bring anyone they want from any time period to comment," said Roddy.

In addition to "Bill and Ted's Excellent Halloween Adventure," magician Brian Bushwood will be performing and "The Rocky Horror Picture Show - A Tribute" will be returning after its successful debut in 2007.



## The Lighter Side of Control of Co

## Mickey's A Not-So-Scary Halloween Party

**PHOTOS BY MATT ROSEBOOM** 

IF UNIVERSAL STUDIOS' HALLOWEEN HORROR NIGHTS IS TOO INTENSE FOR YOU OR IF YOU'RE JUST LOOKING FOR A FUN, FEAR-FREE WAY TO CELEBRATE HALLOWEEN, THEN TAKE A LOOK AT THESE PHOTOS FROM MICKEY'S NOT-SO-SCARY HALLOWEEN PARTY AT THE MAGIC KINGDOM.



A night at Mickey's Not-So-Scary Halloween Party begins by approaching the specially-decorated Main Street Train Station.

The Happy HalloWishes fireworks show is not to be missed as the sky above Cinderella Castle lights up in time with all your favorite villainous tunes. To get the most out of this show, grab a spot toward the end of Main Street USA and the finale will surround you with explosions.



One of the highlights of the night is Mickey's "Boo-To-You" Halloween Parade in which all your favorite Disney characters (especially villains like the Evil Queen posing below, right) come out to socialize. Pictured above and to the right are shovel-wielding butlers and the hitchhiking ghosts from The Haunted Mansion. The top-right photo shows the rockin' skeleton band that helps bring in the villains float.





Most of the Magic Kingdom's rides are open during the party. The Haunted Mansion is the center of attention, with special eerie lighting, extra fog, and a chance to get your picture taken with a ghost!



Street entertainment throughout the night includes performances by an acapella singing group called the Cadaver Dans.



KUNGALOOSH!

The Adventurer's Club Gives its Final Performance.

Written By DEBORAH BRAUSER

Photography By DEBORAH BRAUSER, JEREMIAH GOOD, JEREMY MUSE, MATT ROSEBOOM, and ROBERT RUSSES

Illustrations By TIKA SKIBA



ith one week left until closing, there's a frenetic energy at the Adventurer's Club in Disney's Pleasure Island. Every available space is filled with a laughing, jostling wall of people who seem determined to wring as much enjoyment as possible from every last second. Strange words that don't make much sense to first-timers, but are beloved by the Club's many regulars, are shouted from all directions: "Kungaloosh! Hoopla! Jump up for Jenkies!"

At first, it seems like some odd, secret language. But by the end of the night, everyone in attendance has participated in the induction ceremony (sometimes more than once), learned the most popular phrases, sung the official theme song, and even taken a vow to uphold the Club's doctrine. In other words, we've all become fellow adventurers in a zany world filled with colorful characters and inanimate objects that periodically come to life.

#### NO TIME FOR SADNESS

The last few weeks have become much busier than usual. There are now eight hours of interactive shows presented each night throughout the building, including the wildly popular (though seasonally challenged) Halloween and holiday shows, and a much longer "Hoopla" finale.

In addition to the main stage shows, visitors wander in and out of the smaller rooms jam-packed with artifacts and trip souvenirs – along with several surprises. A floating genie's head resides in the Treasure Room, two masks wake up and start insulting the guests, the "Colonel" leads sing-alongs in the Main Salon (pictured on the opposite page). Plus, a

large group of very talented actors bring the quirky cast to life while mingling with guests. From prim President Pamelia Perkins, to ladies' man Hathaway Browne, to the ever-eager Junior Adventurer Emil Bleehall, the actors portraying them never break character. In addition, the cast changes roles each night, so guests never know who will be playing which character and what spin they'll bring to the part.

Though all of the Pleasure Island





clubs are closing on the same night, the most vocal group by far has been the Adventurer's Club's fans. But according to Adventurer's Club cast member Jay Becker, who is playing the part of Graves the butler this evening, the cast is trying to portray business as usual. "In here it's 1937. And to our characters, the Club will be around forever."

## THE CLUB THAT KNOWS YOUR NAME

RJ Held, the owner of the 550-member Yahoo Adventurer's Club group, estimates that he's been to the Club between 100 to 120 nights over an eight-year period of flying in from California. "I know there are a lot of regulars – locals that come here all the time. I call us the irregulars – we come all the time that we're in town. And I know that each trip I'm going to run into several of the same

people when I come by."
He said that he

can't find anything quite like this near his home in San Francisco. "I like the direct interaction with the characters here. It's like a meet and greet that goes on and on. And it's a different experience every time. It's scripted, but it can still be different based on the actors playing the characters that night and their dealings with the audience."

It's a combination that seems to resonate with fans of all ages, including children. Tonight, a little girl volunteers at the Welcome Party and is soon on stage clapping, dancing and even hula hooping during Fletcher Hodges' song.

Cast member Eric Pender, who happens to also be playing Graves this evening, recalls another little girl who has come in several times with a stuffed cow, just like the one the Emil character carries. "Kids enjoy the club on a whole different, magical level. Even teens that are often eye rolling over other things seem to really enjoy it here. And seeing their parents get picked on is an especially fun bonding experience for them!"

Lori Divincenzo and her mother Bernadette fly to Orlando from Boston at least three times a year and come to the Club every night of their stay. "This place is like my Cheers (from the TV show). Everyone really does know my name. I'm 24 and have been coming to the Adventurer's Club since I was 21." Her mother adds, "And we've been bringing her to the [Pleasure] Island since she was four!"

Jeremiah Good, from Sherman Oaks, Calif., first discovered the club in 1996 and estimates that he's made more than 80 repeat visits. He said that most "normal" people would probably be happy coming by once or twice only. "But if you are a bit off the bubble, you fall in love with it right away. What can be better then a night of wacky Club members entertaining you? I keep coming back because I feel at home here."

Since opening in 1989, several celebrities have come through, including Howie Mandel, Neil Patrick Harris,





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#### CLUB SECRETS

- Zeus (pictured on the previous page) is actually a bank! Affectionately known as "The God with a Rod," the giant statue of Zeus holding a fishing rod has a slot in his right leg where some fans drop in pennies for good luck.
- The Club memorialized actors that left the cast by taking a memento special to a particular actor or character and putting it on display inside the front cabinet in the Treasure Room.

The sealed letters on Grave's serving tray contain messages supposedly written by the various cast members. One from President Pamelia Perkins scolds a fellow Club member for wearing a lampshade and dancing on the bar at a past event!





Robert Guillaume and Raul Julia, and Pixar's John Lasseter. And the cast says they've been honored every time Disney Imagineer Joe Rohde, the main designer of the Club (and who has loaned items from his own collections, including some of the masks) has dropped by. "I think he's been proud to show it off to his friends," said Becker.

THE DREADED ANNOUNCEMENT

It was June 27 when Disney first announced it was closing all six Pleasure

Island clubs to make room for new shopping and dining options. Fans, many of whom feel as though they have an ownership in the club, were stunned at the news. Sites such as SaveTheAdventurersClub.com sprung up almost overnight. Valerie Stephens created a petition that garnered more than 7,000 signatures, as well as a show advocating for the Club's pardon on Blog Talk Radio.

And sci-fi writer Peter David (who proposed to his wife at the Club) started a map-sending protest from his personal blog.

When nothing worked and the weeks started dwindling down, the fans finally began accepting that the closing was really going to happen. That's when many decided they wanted to see "their place" one last time.

Divincenzo said her family changed their airline tickets as soon as they heard the announcement – but she wanted to make sure they came down a week ahead of time. "I knew I couldn't handle being here on the last night because I'd be a mess. These are my people and it feels like my place. Right now I don't even want to face the idea of coming back when it's gone."

Good plans on standing in line outside the Club as early as 9 a.m. on the Club's last day, if allowed. "I've been saving my flyer miles for years just for a reason like this. The day I found out about the Club closing, I booked a room and my air because I wanted to be sure I'm there for the last night."

Guests have also used the last few weeks to thank the cast members in creative ways. They've posted video

and slideshow tributes, sent in pictures and drawings, and hand delivered cakes and scrapbooks. A few have even inserted the cast onto Jinkies cereal boxes (the made up sponsor of the Radio Broadcast show put on in the Club).

Dawn Gorsuch from Chatham, Ohio first came by the Club with her husband 15 years ago, on their 25th wedding anniversary, and has been back more than 40 times. "We are just so devastated about the closing of this marvelous place. It feels like losing family. I know it's silly, but I cry at the thought of all this."

Though they're also sad, of course, the cast is appreciative of the time they've had. "Nineteen years is a great run, especially in theatrical shows, and especially in the

Like most Adventurer's Club cast members, Eric Pender (left in both photos) and Jay Becker (right in both photos) have portrayed various characters on different nights. On the left, both play the part of Graves, the butler, normally reserved for one actor per night. On the right, Pender, as Otis I. Wren, and Becker, as Emil Bleehal, take part in the nightly Balderdash Cup Competition in which Emil is almost always the winner.







attractions," said Becker. "Maybe some day it can come back in some form. But for now, we're moving forward." Adds fellow cast member Pender, "As a performer, you're always looking for your next gig. It's just sad that we won't all get to work together anymore on a daily basis."

#### **FUTURE PLANS**

While the Club closed its doors to the public on Sept. 27, it will actually stay open for special events through the end of January. Many members of the cast are already preparing for new jobs. "Disney has worked hard to find new positions for everyone," said Becker. "The changes are a major renovation to improve the Island and not a cut in staff, which we

all appreciate."

Held confided, "I'm not writing the Club off just yet. There are still a lot of rumors floating around that it might come back in some way. So I'll hold out hope for a little longer." In the meantime, he's considering turning his Yahoo group into a database of "where are they now" information about the various cast members for their fans.

And what about the characters that inhabit the Club? Will they get a happy ending? The rumor is that on the last night's performance of the Radiothon, for the first time the characters won't be able to raise funds to keep the Club open. The doom and gloom is lifted, however, when a wealthy donor suddenly appears

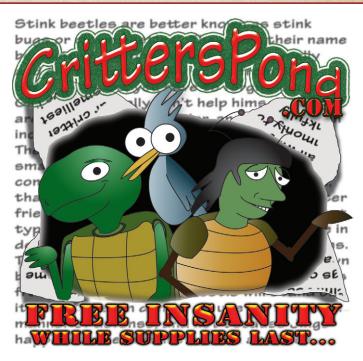
to whisk them all away for a fabulous safari. In other words, the show will go on... just not in the real world.

A well known quote has started popping up in one of Samantha Sterling's shows that seems to beautifully summarize the entire situation, "Don't cry because it is over. Smile because it happened." Becker nods at the line and adds, "This was the best job I ever had. Just an amazing place to work. To all the fans: thanks for loving it as much as we do. Kungaloosh! And keep adventuring."

(Note: This issue went to press one week before the Club's closing. Please check our Web site at attractionsmagazine.com for videos and more pictures.)



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## The Search For Hidden Mickeys

#### By Steven Barrett

inding Hidden Mickeys is a fun game to play while you're visiting Walt Disney World. What is a Hidden Mickey? It's a partial or complete image of Mickey Mouse (or other Disney character) that has been hidden by Disney's Imagineers in the designs of Disney attractions, hotels, restaurants, shops and other areas. These images are designed to blend into their surroundings.

No complete official list of current Hidden Mickeys exists anywhere. Disney has published lists in the past, but these are incomplete and not kept up to date. Disney encourages the Imagineers to add Hidden Mickeys to new construction and to refurbishments of existing structures. It's up to us to find them. A few years ago, for example, an Imagineer artist posted on an unofficial Disney Web site (there are many) that he'd placed a Hidden Mickey on the Tip Board near Spaceship Earth in Epcot. On the rotating earth that forms the "O" in Epcot, Australia is shaped like a classic (three-circle) Mickey. No one had spotted it yet, so the Imagineer wanted to tell everyone about it.

How did Hidden Mickeys begin? The official Disney line is that Imagineers began placing Mickey's image in Epcot in the late 1980s as an inside joke. The story I like best is from Jim Hill of

jimhillmedia.com. When Epcot was being built in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Disney management didn't want Disney characters in Epcot, since the new park was supposed to be more adult than the Magic Kingdom. The Imagineers building Epcot, in a "silent protest", began hiding Mickey throughout Epcot to bring him into the park. Thus, Hidden Mickeys were born.

Anyone can find these gems. You just have to be alert. Look for the classic three-circle forms, as well as side profiles and three-quarter profiles of his face. Look for his full figure and even his shoes, gloves and handprints. Not any collection of circles will do. The circles have to be

### Do You See Them?









Here are a few examples of some newer Hidden Mickeys found at the Magic Kingdom. When Pooh's Playful Spot opened in Fantasyland in 2005, it didn't take long for fans to spot the pair of Hidden Mickeys pictured above. The one on the left is found inside the tree, just above the front entrance. The other (top, middle) is on the backside of the tree near the rear entrance. One of the newest Hidden Mickeys at the Magic Kingdom can be found in abundance forming the treads on all four tires of the park's new Grand Marshall vehicle.

proportionate to his head and ears with the ear circles smaller than the head. Not all of the classic circle Mickeys (bubbles, pumpkins, tomatoes, cannonballs, etc.) are purposeful, that is, placed by Disney for certain. Many are accidental images. Sometimes, there's no way for us to know, so we use our best judgment.

The side profile and other complicated Mickey shapes are more obvious when you find them. There's no way these Hidden Mickeys are accidental. These are the real gems to spot. My favorite Hidden Mickey was the full figure Mickey Mouse in the mural above the entrance to Body Wars in the Wonders of Life Pavilion at Epcot. Sadly, this pavilion has been closed most of the time in recent years, and this wonderful Hidden Mickey has been lost as the area was repainted.

Another one of my favorites is the waving Mickey in the leaves and flowers on the outside mural just past the tiger area of the Maharajah Jungle Trek in Disney's Animal Kingdom. It's a terrific image, difficult to spot, but I think he'll be with us for a while.

Don't forget other hidden characters. Look for hidden Goofy, Donald Duck, Minnie Mouse, Winnie the Pooh, Kermit the Frog, Tinker Bell, Baloo, Pluto and others. I'd heard of a Hidden Jafar in the Animal Kingdom and searched for it for weeks. I asked several cast members about it and none of them knew about it. Not all cast members will know the answer to your specific question. I knew that, so I kept trying. I was wandering the Pangani Forest Exploration Trail in early 2005, and I asked a cast member about the Hidden Jafar. She was turning to show me, and I shouted as I spotted the marvelous rock right behind her! A huge sculpted rock is shaped like Jafar's profile. I'd passed this area many times before but had never seen this majestic hidden character. I have great respect for the artists who shaped this rock and other hidden characters at Walt Disney World.

I wrote a book published in 2001 (*The Hassle-Free Walt Disney World Vacation*) that I update annually. This

#### Now Do You See Them?

Sometimes it takes a little while to find the Hidden Mickey in an area. They're not always obvious and often overlooked. Below are two often-missed examples.





There's a tough-to-spot Hidden Mickey in the backdrop (above) behind the effects demonstration at the beginning of the Backlot Tour at Disney's Hollywood Studios.

You might be tempted to look for a Hidden Mickey inside a shop at Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge (left) but by looking too close, you'd be missing one.

#### Not Quite The Same

Hidden Mickeys come in plenty of varieties. While many are hidden within artwork or on buildings, some are hidden in plain sight.





While enjoying the Living with the Land attraction at Epcot, don't miss this mold hanging around, forming gourds into that popular shape.

Also at Epcot, visit the Japan pavilion in the World Showcase to find this coi pond sporting a drain cover with a special design on it.

Some Hidden Mickeys aren't always around for you to find. Check out the chin on this "streetmosphere" performer at Disney's Hollywood Studios. He may look like he got himself greasy working on cars, but that familiar three-circle pattern seems like too much of a coincidence.



touring guidebook shows you how to navigate WDW with minimal waits in line. I extrapolated these efficient touring plans to the six Hidden Mickey scavenger hunts in my Hidden Mickeys book (Hidden Mickeys: A Field Guide to Walt Disney World's Best Kept Secrets). The third edition of the Hidden Mickeys book was published in 2007 with a total of more than 700 Hidden Mickeys described. Each of the four major theme parks has its own scavenger hunt, and the other two hunts are for the resort hotels and the rest of Walt Disney World. The scavenger hunts are constructed for efficiency (I don't like waiting in long lines), or you can use the

book's index to look for Hidden Mickeys wherever you happen to be. I published a Disneyland Hidden Mickeys book in 2007, with similar hunts arranged for efficiency.

I also started a Web site in 2005, www.hiddenmickeysguide.com, so that folks could send me new Hidden Mickey sightings. Visit the Web site to see some possible Hidden Mickey photos. I don't accept all sightings, as some are "wishful thinking" Hidden Mickeys. (My neighbor, Lew Brooks, calls them "two-beer Mickeys", since the image begins to look like Mickey only after a few beers). These Mickeys are close but not

good enough to count. Maybe the circles are too far apart or aren't proportional enough.

I find one or more new hidden characters every month. My neighbors, friends and family are often first to spot new ones. Folks e-mail me about new ones they've spotted or hidden characters that have been lost to refurbishment. If you find a new one or notice one that's been lost, please let me know on my Web site.

Looking for Hidden Mickeys is a great way to add enjoyment to your Walt Disney World visit. Have fun finding them!

## NOT a Hidden Mickey!







When searching for Hidden Mickeys, you may discover a few things that aren't quite what you were looking for. While finding the two Mickeys in Pooh's Playful Spot mentioned on page 30, don't miss the tribute to the 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea attraction that once occupied that same location. Be careful not to think you've found a Mickey in every appearance of three circles. A vase in the Canada pavilion at Epcot has three white circles near each other, but they're all the same size. These rocks on Peter Pan's Flight in Fantasyland don't have the right proportions either.



(This page was intentionally left blank. Next time, it could be yours.)

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## A TRIP TO SIMPLER TIMES

#### ITIAIN STREET'S HORSE-DRAWN TROLLEY RIDE

#### By Ken Hughes ■

aybe it's Marceline, Missouri redux, maybe it's just an idealized version of the typical American small town circa 1910, but the Magic Kingdom's Main Street definitely takes you back to a simpler, more innocent time in our nation's history.

Of course, the architecture and background music have their roles to play in this time-travel illusion, but as with anything Disney, what really sells it are the things that enhance or "plus" it. One of those "plusses," operating on Main Street since the park opened in 1971, is the horse-drawn trolley ride. It can save the footsore a few steps from Town Square to the Castle Forecourt (or the other way around), and it offers enlivening kinetic energy to Main Street. Those are its functions from an operations point of view; what the Main Street Trolley is, however, is a delight and a living tribute to a time when horses were woven into daily life like motor vehicles are today. Here as everywhere in Walt Disney World, interacting with cast members pays huge dividends in the memories you take home with you.

I met with cast members Mark Beatty, Phyllis Nolte and Bob Carr, all longtime horse folks. Like most veteran cast members, they are warm and personable to a degree rarely seen in the real world. I also met Lucky, a magnificent 1,100-pound grey-white percheron.

"Percherons are similar in size and strength to clydesdales, but don't have the clydesdale's feathery hairs near their hooves," explained Mark. "They're big, and can look intimidating," added



Phyllis, "but they're sweet-tempered and very trainable in a place like this where there's all kinds of stuff going on around them - the music, kids hollering and running up and down the street, all of that." Indeed, I was amazed at how Phyllis hardly had to raise

her voice to give Lucky commands. Clearly, he was attuned to her voice over the confusion of background noise. "Step up, big boy!" she called, in a voice far short of shouting. With a gentle snap of the reins, Lucky pulled the trolley out of the car barn and into Town Square.

As we rode along, waving to

passing guests and cast members, Mark explained, "The trolleys were custom-built in the central shops here on property, and they run on standard steel rails, the same as those used all over the country for streetcars and trolleys, except that our situation is

> a little unique. Remember that we're on the second level up here. Below us are the Utilidors." (Cast memberonly tunnels.)

> I asked Bob how the horses are shod-steel or rubber? "Steel," he said. "Rubber wears out too fast and it also doesn't give you that clip-clop sound. Because the trolleys are as









Phyllis Nolte takes Lucky out for a stroll on Main Street.

much for atmosphere as transportation, that sound is important." Phyllis cast a fond eye at Lucky. "He's so surefooted. Even in the rain or over the steel plates in the street, he just pulls right along."

No sooner was this said, it seems, when an oblivious family standing in the middle of Main Street forced Phyllis to stop the trolley. How they missed the clanging bell and Phyllis' friendly yet firm warnings to move out of the way is a mystery. The stop left Lucky standing right on a steel plate. Once the sheepish dad led his family off the tracks, Phyllis told Lucky to step up, and he slipped and lost his footing for a second. With a little extra guidance from Bob, who hopped off the trolley to take the harness in hand, Lucky found his way off to the side a bit on the asphalt and we were off again.

"Aww," Phyllis laments. "We had to stop right there, didn't we? And right after I bragged!" Lucky's composure was impressive.

How rigorous is the training?, I asked. "Very," said Mark. "We have to be sure the horses seen onstage are essentially unspookable, for obvious reasons. They are all heavily exposed to the park environment as we train them, and those who don't work out for onstage duty are assigned elsewhere on

the property." He said there are seven horses in rotation, but the main three are Lucky, Drummer and Fritz.

A couple of times during the leisurely round-trip from the car barn and back, children reached out to pet Lucky, and Phyllis gently and kindly rebuffed them. "For the safety of the guests, of course, but also the horses. We make exceptions for blind children and special-needs kids."

Asked what her most magical memories of her 17 years as a Disney World cast member are; "Those moments with special-needs kids are right up there. I also really enjoy it when we get to participate in the shows. Usually the trolley is used for the little show these folks just did." Phyllis indicates the Double-Decker Bus passing in the opposite direction, full of costumed entertainers who've just done one of the Magic Kingdom's many "impromptu" shows.

At the next stop, a magical moment of a different sort. To the loud disgust of a young boy on the sidewalk, Lucky, how shall I say ... emptied his water tank. "His radiator overheated!" said Phyllis playfully in reply to the boy's amusing reaction. A thumbs-down to the first custodial cast member spotted once we're moving again is a signal to deploy the Pixie Dust. "Walk past that spot in two minutes, or maybe even

less," Mark said, "And you won't even know Lucky had been there."

"Anytime any of the horses are out on Main Street, these custodians know to try and catch my eye as we pass," added Phyllis." A thumbs-up means no clean-up is needed.

Back in the Car Barn once again, I disembarked and bid farewell to Phyllis, Mark, Bob, and Lucky. "Look at you!" I said to Lucky. "Aren't you magnificent?" "Don't encourage him!" came Phyllis' faux-annoyed response. "He gets a swelled head, and then he's just impossible!"



## DISNEY'S CARIBBEAN BEACH RESORT

Tropical & relaxing with a new pirate theme

BY DEBORAH BRAUSER

PHOTOS BY Deborah Brauser Matt Roseboom



enovations are giving a shiny new facelift to Disney's 2,112-room moderate resort with the tropical vibe. To help celebrate its 20-year anniversary, Disney's Caribbean Beach Resort is adding newly themed guest rooms and a

greatly expanded pool area to its brightly hued community of six island-named villages clustered around a peaceful 42-acre lake.

After checking in at the Custom House building, all guests are directed to their assigned rooms inside the colorcoded pink, purple, blue or yellow

two-story buildings of Martinique, Barbados, Aruba, Jamaica, Trinidad South, or Trinidad North. Each has its own private pool and white sandy beach, complete with lawn chairs and swaying hammocks.

Soon, all rooms in the Trinidad South village will be transformed into a pirate lover's paradise (concept art pictured on the next page) with shipshaped beds, headboards that seem to be made out of masts, pirate curtains and other themed decorations. These higher priced, premium rooms will start their makeovers in January, with completion scheduled for the middle of February.

All other rooms throughout the property are getting the *Finding Nemo* treatment (pictured left), with bedspreads and wall borders featuring Nemo, Dory, Crush and other characters from the movie, fresh paint and carpet, and new in-room refrigerators and coffee makers. These renovations are also scheduled to be completed in February.

Tina and Dino Delli Fraime from Laval, Canada chose the Caribbean Beach Resort because of its name, hoping for a fun and relaxing atmosphere for themselves and their 5-year-old son Mario. "We love it here and how it



doesn't feel crowded at all," said Tina Delli Fraime as her family played in the new pool area. "The rooms are very clean and quiet with lots of privacy." They're also happy with the new renovations. "As soon as our son walked in, he was so excited and said, 'Oh, it's Nemo!"

The liveliest part of the resort is located at the Old Port Royale Centertown. Inside, guests can enjoy a large food court, a small grocery store, the Goombay Games arcade and two gift shops – all of which seem to be located inside a colorful Caribbean marketplace. And don't miss the pin board at the check-out area of the "outside" gift shop. All pins shown there are available for trading.

The Market Street Food Court (below), which borders a 500-seat common dining area, offers breakfast selections along with family-friendly lunch and dinner choices such as sandwiches, pizzas, pasta, and burgers of all types. Dino Delli Fraime said, "The food court was good and well organized and quick. It even offered some healthy choices!"

Billing itself as "American cuisine with a Caribbean flair," Shutters is the resort's on-site full-service restaurant.



And though it only serves dinner, its opening is quite an event as guests and cast members literally limbo their way in each evening. Jill Kobylesky, restaurant guest services manager at the resort, said that in addition to offering quick-casual dining, the chefs can accommodate almost any dietary need. "This can include allergies, needing something

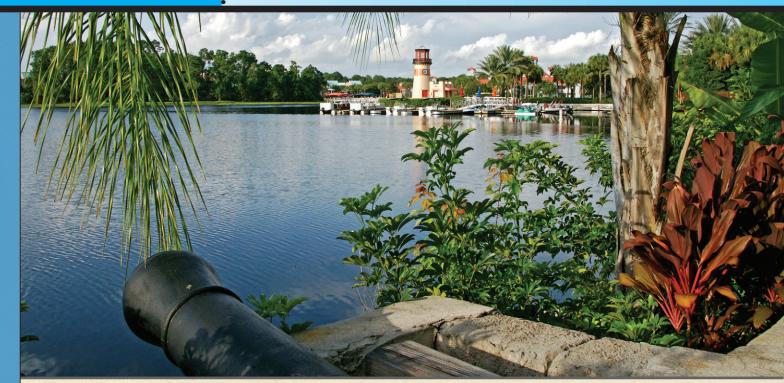
to be nut-free, gluten-free, or anything else. Our chefs can even come out and discuss exactly what ingredients go into each dish." She mentioned that this is something all Disney properties offer. Oh - and be sure to look for the hidden Mickey located somewhere inside the restaurant.

The new community pool area is located outside Old Port Royale. From January until September, the old pool was closed, gutted, rebuilt, and expanded – a lot. Before closing, it covered 4,276 square feet with one waterslide, a small kids' area and a five-person spa. Now, the area covers 7,280 square feet, has two waterslides (one is an inside-outside ride at 82-feet long), water cannons, two 12-person spas, and a 2,152-square-foot kids' play area. Though it still has its "old Spanish fort" look, the only parts of the old pool to survive the renovations are the two turrets that used to hold the stone bridge and one of the waterslides - which has now been completely refinished.

Next to the expanded pool is the all new kiddie area featuring a shallow, ankle-deep zero-entry pool encircling



## Resort Report



Scenic views are common around the resort's waterways. The lighthouse in the distance is part of the Barefoot Bay Boat Yard.

a pirate ship big enough for kids and parents to enjoy. This giant fun ship is decked out with water curtains and water fountains, two small water slides, and an enclosed water flume. On top, a large 158-gallon barrel slowly fills before sounding a loud clanging bell and then dumping its contents onto the waiting, screaming kids below.

Something that most adults will appreciate is the pool-side Banana Cabana bar offering drinks of all types. Jimmy Buffett and other tropical tunes can be heard throughout the outside patio, dotted with colorful umbrellas, a gurgling water fountain, and vendor

carts selling temporary tattoos, hair wraps and more.

The 1.4-mile lushly landscaped pathway that winds around the entire lake is perfect for walking, jogging or pedaling a rental bike. Many guests also enjoy feeding one of the many large turtles that swim alongside the





boardwalk areas.

Other outside activities include sand volleyball; renting small sailboats, pontoon boats and canoes at the Barefoot Bay Boat Yard; taking a guided fishing excursion; or even signing up the kids for a two-hour Adventure Cruise where they will hear stories about buried treasure from long ago.

In addition to providing on-going transportation to all Disney parks, there is also an internal village bus service. Overall, the resort strives to provide a calm, pampering, "Caribbean experience" for everyone who checks in. Stacey Springer, resort guest service operations manager, said the laid-back island feel, beaches, hammocks, and pools just call for relaxation – and fun. "With our new pool ship and pirate-themed rooms, we're becoming 'Pirate Central'!"

Dino Delli Fraime agrees. "There's

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so much to do. So I'd say just relax and enjoy whatever you choose." His son Mario adds, with all the seriousness a 5-year-old can muster, "I like it here with the fun slides and everything. It just makes me really happy and I don't want to ever leave!"

For more information about Disney's Caribbean Beach Resort or to book a room for your next Orlando vacation, visit disneyworld.com or call Disney directly at 407-939-6244.



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# Restaurant Report



# Dine Among Sea World Stars

Written by J. Sternagel

Whether you like killer whales, sharks or getting backstage, SeaWorld offers a mealtime option for you.

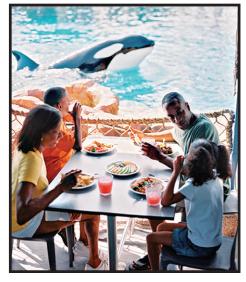


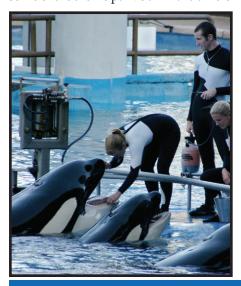
eaWorld Orlando offers theme park guest many things: thrilling rides, worldclass entertainment and presentations of some of the world's most interesting marine animals. What first-time theme park guests may not know is that the theme park offers specialized dining experiences that offer an even more intimate and fun look at some of the park's amazing animals.

Take the Dine with Shamu experience for example. The dinner, which is held at Shamu Stadium, offers families a chance to enjoy a meal while interacting with some of the theme park's animal trainers. Here, they can ask questions about marine animals and observe a training session with Shamu up close in a small-group atmosphere.

According to Kelly Flaherty Clark, an animal training curator, the Dine with Shamu experience is the ultimate opportunity for fans of the park's sea life.

"It's Orlando's most unique dining spot – where else can you dine next to killer whales?" she said. "Our guests enjoy a delicious buffet in a backstage area. Dining takes place right next to our killer whales – imagine that you're close enough to hear them breathe.







During Dine with Shamu, not all eating happens at the dinner table. Humans aren't the only ones hungry around here.

The incredible experience is hosted by killer whale experts and the highlight is being right there for an actual training session with Shamu and his trainers. Our trainers are available to answer any questions our guests might have."

Clark says she especially loves facilitating the dining experience for young diners.

"Everyone seated around the pool is affected by being so close to killer whales," she said. "I think the children's reactions get the trainers most excited. There is nothing like seeing the surprise and wonder in their eyes when the whales swim by.

"No matter how young or old the guests are, it's always exciting for the few who experience this behind-thescenes look at what goes into training SeaWorld's killer whale family."

But regardless of a guest's age, attendees at Dine with Shamu are often wowed by the intimate experience of being so close to such a large marine animal. This, Clark said, is just one example of the unique opportunities available at SeaWorld Orlando.

"There's no place else in the world where you can experience something this unique," Clark said. "It's an experience that's perfect for families, teens, first dates, honeymooners, or 50th anniversaries ... and we've had them all!"

The dinner consists of a buffet that includes a selection of salads, chicken, turkey, seafood creole, beef stew, brownies, cupcakes and more. Kid-friendly foods are options as well, including spaghetti, macaroni and cheese, hot dogs and fresh fruit. Adults cost \$39 plus tax, children ages 3 to 9 are \$19, and children 2 and under are free but require reservations.

But Dine with Shamu isn't the only unique dining experience the theme park offers. SeaWorld Orlando's Backstage at Believe offers guests a meal and a backstage look at the park's popular killer whale show. The experience is



The environment within Shark's Underwater Grill makes you feel as if you're hundreds of feet under the sea inside a luxury submarine.



hosted by a show stage manager and diners are free to ask questions about the making of and performance of Believe – one of SeaWorld's newest and most popular aquatic shows. Believe stars Shamu and friends, and is themed on accentuating the complex animal-human relationship between killer whales and their trainers.

Dishes in the line-up for the Backstage at Believe experience include a buffet of pasta shrimp alfredo, seafood creole, different salads, rice, mashed potatoes, turkey, and various desserts. Kids' menu includes macaroni and cheese, hot dogs, pasta and more. After dining, the group is led to Shamu Stadium, where families can enjoy VIP seating for a performance of the show. Participants also receive a hand-carved whale tail necklace as a keepsake. Adults cost \$24.95 and children ages 3 to 9 are \$9.95.

Another unique dining experience at the park is Shark's Underwater Grill. Here, brave guests can dine while a cluster of 50 sharks circle the room.

## Restaurant Report \( \)



But no worries – the restaurant's floor-to-ceiling shark tank is one of the big draws to the place. The height of the tank allows individuals at any table in the dining room a good look at these ominous sea creatures. The tank's width, which stretches 125 feet long and holds a whopping 700,000 gallons of water, also gives diners a chance to view several different species of sharks while they dine.

According to Cathy Valeriano, vice president of Culinary Services for SeaWorld, Discovery Cove and Aquatica, Shark's Underwater Grill offers great cuisine as well as an adventurous underwater atmosphere.

"Shark's Underwater Grill is a fullservice, upscale dining experience that immerses guests in an underwater world of sharks," Valeriano said. "What makes Shark's Underwater Grill so unique is not only the flavorful Floribbean-style cuisine, but the submarine-like ambiance and the fact they're dining next to floorto-ceiling windows teeming with the denizens of the deep."

"Floribbean" fare is the style of food described by the establishment as a mix of Florida and Caribbean dishes, with a focus on seafood. Available dishes include blackened sea scallops, filet mignon, snapper and more. For children, options include pasta, chicken and popcorn shrimp. Prices vary per menu item. Reservations are not required, but highly recommended.

To learn more about dining options at SeaWorld Orlando, including their Makahiki Luau, or to make a reservation, call 1-800-327-2424. Passport Members may receive a discount on these and other SeaWorld dining experiences.

Even the bar (below) at Shark's Underwater Grill is teeming with sealife. Beneath the glass surface lies an aquarium filled with fish and coral. When not eating, guests can marvel at the numerous sharks in the tanks (bottom).







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by John Green & Pat Lewis













# SPOTCHO DIFFERENCO

Mickey's "Boo-to-You" Halloween Parade ends with Goofy riding down Main Street. Can you find all 10 differences between these two pictures?





1. Purple gum balls have turned blue. 2. Main Street clock changed to 3:25. 3. Wheel cover circle colors reversed. 4. Extra pipe added to top/back of vehicle. 5. GIFTS now reads STUFF. 6. Extra gold bars added to front engine. 7. Red cable removed from back of vehicle. 10. Decorations added below left windows.

## Olympic Champion Michael Phelps Welcomed Home

concluded.

Disney gives the swimming star a parade at the Magic Kingdom.



**Above:** Michael Phelps waved to fans as he was driven down Main Street USA.

**Right:** Mickey later presented Phelps with the Key to the Kingdom in front of Cinderella Castle.

He may not have exclaimed "I'm going to Disney World!" after winning his eighth gold medal at the 2008 Summer Olympic Games held in Beijing, but that's where swimming star Michael Phelps ended up on Aug. 29 for his first public appearance in the United States since the games in China

Following a series of fingertip wins that gave him the honor of becoming the first person to ever win eight gold medals in a single Olympics, Phelps embarked on

a worldwide tour before making his way home.

"We went from Beijing to Portugal, Portugal to London, London to the U.S.," Phelps said just after his balloonand confetti-filled welcome at the Magic Kingdom. "It's been a long trip but I've been able to catch up on a lot of sleep on the plane."

Referring to Walt Disney World and the Magic Kingdom, Phelps added,

#### Story and Photos by Ricky Brigante

"This is where dreams happen, this is where dreams come true. I was here once in my whole life in 2004. ... We're definitely going to hit the water park today and definitely try to get as many roller coasters in as we can. Just ride some rides and have some fun, relax a little bit, see some sights."

When asked what his favorite attraction in Orlando is, it's no surprise that Phelps replied, "I'm looking forward to Splash Mountain today." It seems he just can't stay out of the water.





Tell us where this photo was taken and you could win an **fittractions** t-shirt! E-mail your answer to mystery@attractionsmagazine.com

Hint: While Halloween brings many skulls, this particular one is present year-round in one of the most magical places on Earth.

The deadline for entries is November 15, 2008. One answer allowed per person, per issue. Please include your name, mailing address and telephone number with your answer. Everyone who submits the correct location will go into a drawing. One person, randomly selected from all correct entries, will win a prize. We reserve the right to publish the names of all who submit the correct location. One winner per household allowed every six months.

## LAST ISSUE'S MYSTERY PHOTO



Congratulations to Evan Henk of Punta Gorda, Fla., who correctly guessed last issue's Mystery Photo location. The correct answer was ImageWorks at Epcot, as you exit the Journey Into Imagination With Figment ride. Evan will receive an Attractions Magazine T-shirt.

# Out of the Loop



## Attraction News from Outside the Orlando Area

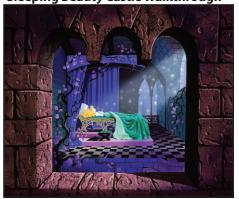
**By Andy Guinigundo** 

Legoland California Opens Sea Life Aquarium



Carlsbad, Calif. – Legoland California opened Sea Life Aquarium in August. The 29th such aquarium in the world is the first of its kind in North America. The aquarium will feature 72 Lego models including an 11-foot-long yellow submarine. A 35-footlong acrylic tunnel allows visitors to study the Lost City of Atlantis up close without getting wet. The aquatic life is likely to take center stage however. The 200,000-gallon tank will include more than 200 species.

Disneyland to Open
Sleeping Beauty Castle Walkthrough



Anaheim, Calif. – Disneyland officials recently announced that a newly "reawakened" Sleeping Beauty Castle Walkthrough is to open in December, in time for the 50th anniversary of the movie. The original castle walkthrough at Disneyland opened soon after the movie was first released. The castle has gone through several revisions through the years, but is now set

to return to a style resembling the original, but incorporating technology not available in the 1950s.

Team USA Volleyball Visits Toy Story Mania



Anaheim, Calif. – Usually athletes visit a Disney theme park after they have won a major sporting event. With their training facility located in Anaheim, members of Team USA men's volleyball team enjoyed Disney's California Adventure days before departing for the Beijing games. The athletes were seen riding the new Toy Story Mania. After surpassing 135,000 points each on the 3-D carnival game themed ride, they went on to an even bigger prize, gold medals, in Beijing.

## Not-So-Scary Halloween Party Makes Its Way to Paris

**Paris, France** – While Disneyland Paris has been celebrating Halloween in the resort for some time now, they have not had the Mickey's Not-So-Scary Halloween Party that has been so popular here in Orlando. The special ticketed event will take place on designated nights in the weeks leading up to Halloween.

#### **Busch Gardens to Open Sesame Street**



Williamsburg, Va. – Can you tell me how to get to Sesame Street? Apparently, it's just past that roller coaster and next door to those Clydesdales. The new year will bring a new major attraction to Busch Gardens Europe in Virginia - a Sesame Street themed area.

The attraction will include a junior roller coaster, log flume, wet and dry play areas, retail and food shops, stage performances and a 4-D movie. Character dining will be available as well as the "1, 2, 3 Smile With Me" photo studio. The current kid-friendly areas including the Land of the Dragons will remain.

#### It's Lucky "7" for Six Flags

Six Flags, Inc., USA – This season marked one of the most ambitious for Six Flags. New rides from thrill rides to family-friendly rides were featured in every Six Flags domestic park. This included seven new roller coasters in seven different parks: The Dark Knight Coaster (Great Adventure, Great America), X2 (Magic Mountain), Goliath (Fiesta Texas), Tony Hawk's Big Spin (Over Texas, Discovery Kingdom), and Evel Knievel (St. Louis). With nearly three-fourths of the country within six hours of a Six Flags Park, they are banking on park-goers taking the one-tank-of-gas trip to experience these new thrills.

### World's Tallest Water Ride Planned at Holiday World



**Santa Claus, Ind.** – The Pilgrim's Plunge will be a classic "shoot the chute" water ride but in the world's largest dimensions. Set to open in 2009, an open-elevator system will whisk boats 135 feet into the air pausing briefly before plunging 131 feet down a 45 degree angle creating a 45-foot-tall, 90-footwide wall of water. The ride will reach speeds of 50 miles per hour.

# Photo Stories 5





ometimes, during the rainy months of hurricane season in Florida, it's necessary to improvise when you simply do not want to spend a fortune on ponchos just to ride out the wet weather inside an Orlando theme park. This guest simply looked no further than her friendly neighborhood superstore to provide a little shelter for her young travel companion. Our recommendation: Head to the nearest theme park gift shop and ask for the biggest plastic bag they have. It's a whole lot cheaper than a poncho and likely a whole lot sturdier than the bag pictured here.

Got a photo from Orlando that tells a story?

E-mail: photos@attractionsmagazine.com\*

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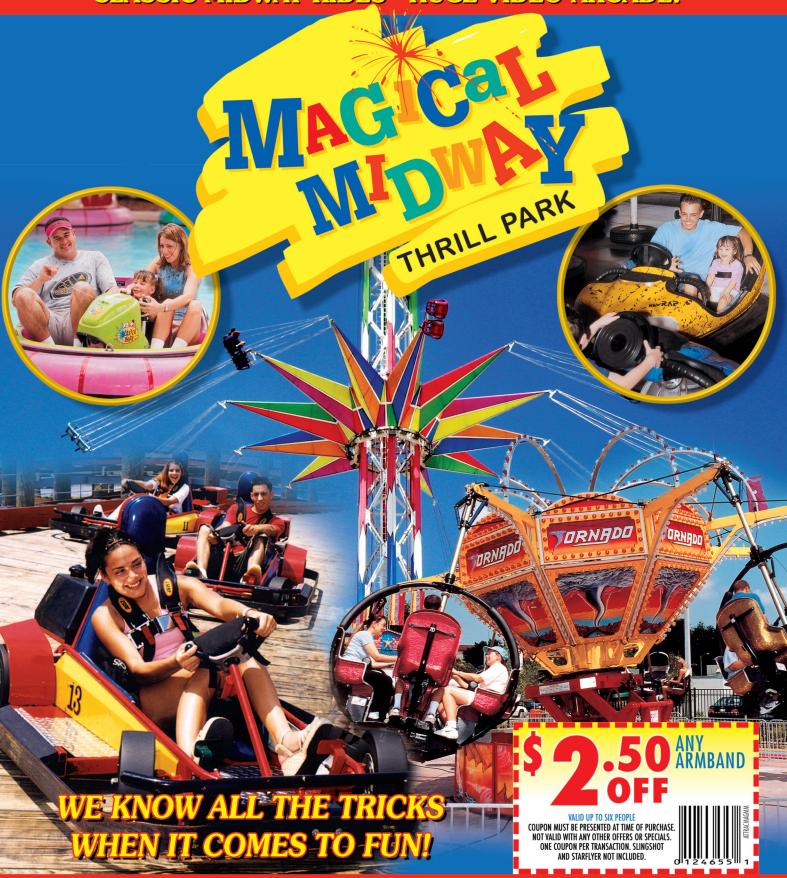
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